

Tennessee Agriculture 2005



Department Report & Statistical Summary

About the cover...

Each year, firefighters with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry join forces with local firefighters to combat an average of 2,500 wildfires that burn 25,000 acres or more of forestland – threatening valuable timber resources, wildlife, homes and lives. During severe droughts, as much as 60,000 acres or more can burn in a single season, costing Tennesseans millions of dollars in fire suppression costs alone. Division firefighters and the heavy equipment they use, called fireplows, are often the first and last resort in averting a major catastrophe especially now that the boundaries between rural and urban areas are increasingly blurred due to development.

This year's cover marks a milestone in our state's history with an unprecedented \$20 million investment, supported by Governor Phil Bredesen and the General Assembly, to replace an aging and unserviceable fleet of firefighting dozers and transports. With 112 new state-of-the-art fireplows and transports now deployed across the state, division firefighters are better equipped to more safely, efficiently and effectively suppress wildfires. Read more about how the Division of Forestry is protecting our state's forest resources from a host of threats on page 11.

Featured cover photo:

By state photographer Phil Cicero.

Design by Art Colebank Graphic Arts.

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Tennessee Department of General Services.*

Governor Phil Bredesen

We have worked diligently with the General Assembly over the past three years in restoring some balance and common sense to our state budget – with no new taxes. This is good for rural and urban Tennesseans alike.



Although it has been difficult at times with some hard choices having been made, ultimately we have been successful in protecting our state's fiscal condition. This has allowed us to invest in important priorities like education, job creation, public safety, and yes, rural development – something that has been long overdue for attention.

As I travel our beautiful state, I am constantly reminded of the importance that our farms and forests play in our economy, environment and quality of life. I am proud that we have been able to make two important investments to protect and develop this important resource on which so many of our rural communities depend.

First, a year ago the state committed to the protection of our forest resources and employee safety with a \$20 million investment in state-of-the-art wildland firefighting equipment – replacing aging dozers and transports. Second, this year with the support of the General Assembly we were able to make a special \$5 million investment to help revitalize and develop our agricultural industry in some key areas.

We want to continue focusing on needed agricultural investments, farm and forest conservation and quality service to the public we serve. I'm pleased to join with the employees of the department in bringing this report, which serves as a record of our commitment of quality service to agriculture and to all Tennesseans.

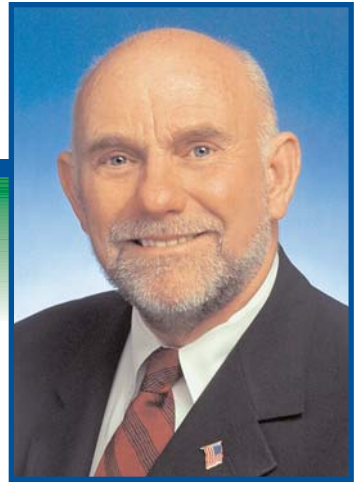
Sincerely, _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Phil Bredesen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Phil" and last name "Bredesen" clearly legible.

Phil Bredesen
Governor

Commissioner Ken Givens

I thank Governor Bredesen for his foresight and members of the General Assembly for their support in making critical investments to protect our valuable forest resources and to expand our agricultural development efforts.



Wildfire not only threatens thousands of acres of valuable forest resources each year, but it threatens lives, homes and the environment. The unprecedented complete re-tooling of our forestry firefighting fleet will help our firefighters to respond more safely, quickly and effectively in putting out wildfires.

Important changes are taking place on the farm, too. Farm income from tobacco, once a staple of many rural communities, has sharply declined. Farmers face increased pressures from foreign competition and higher production costs. New threats of plant and animal diseases arise every day. That's why the state's \$5 million investment in agricultural revitalization is so important.

These dollars will be used strategically to help implement the National Animal ID System in Tennessee, to enhance farm income by encouraging genetic improvement of our cattle herds; and to foster agricultural development through specialty crops, agri-tourism, value-added production and other innovative farm enterprises.

The face of agriculture is changing quickly in Tennessee, and we're making great strides in meeting new challenges while balancing the best of consumer and regulatory services that serve all our citizens. By sharing this report on our programs and the latest farm production numbers from our partner, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Tennessee Field Office, we hope you will share our enthusiasm about the future.

Sincerely, _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K. Givens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ken Givens
Commissioner

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A Tradition of Service



TDA provides an array of valuable consumer services from food safety and product quality assurance to pesticide regulation and environmental monitoring.

The department provides technical and financial assistance to landowners for forestland management. Principal forestry programs include wildfire prevention and suppression, state forest management, forest health, tree seedling production, urban forestry management and forest inventory.

Water quality improvement programs and services complement other state and federal conservation initiatives. And, the department's traditional mission to promote agriculture has evolved to include domestic and international marketing, agribusiness development, market news and livestock grading services.

Our Mission:

To serve the citizens of Tennessee by promoting wise uses of our agricultural and forest resources, developing economic opportunities, and ensuring safe and dependable food and fiber

Tennessee Department of Agriculture

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Administration

Administration includes budget, legal services, personnel and public affairs. Staff members work with state legislators and industry to ensure prospective programs have adequate statutory authority, staffing and clerical support.

Agricultural Crime Unit - The ACU provides law enforcement support for the department's regulatory and forestry programs related to animal and plant health, food safety, pesticide use and wildland fire arson investigation. The ACU comprises a supervisor and 10 investigators, each working in a seven- to 12- county area to coordinate with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. The unit frequently assists local law enforcement agencies in the investigation and prosecution of crimes related to livestock theft and illegal drug manufacturing. The ACU provides an important security presence in our rural communities and is actively involved in homeland security planning and vigilance activities.

Boll Weevil Eradication Program

— In 2004, the program delivered promised economic and environmental benefits with reduced cotton insecticide use and yet another yield record of 900 lbs. of lint per acre, adding to a string of yield records that directly correlate with eradication efforts. The program continued its ongoing battle with migratory weevils from Northeast Arkansas. Ninety-nine percent of trapped weevils were found in the five-county area most susceptible to weevil migration along the Mississippi River. With the eradication program now in place in Northeast Arkansas, the flow of migratory weevils is expected to end, allowing for the completion of the active phase of the eradication program in Tennessee.

This latest record-setting year followed a successful referendum in March 2004, which allowed program debt to be refinanced at a more favorable rate of interest and payments to be amortized over a ten-year period of time. Initial interest savings of approximately

\$500,000 per year were realized, along with a substantial reduction in assessment rates to a maximum of \$12.25 per acre. A further rate reduction was made possible by a \$3.89 million appropriation from the Tennessee General Assembly. These positive developments continue to strengthen Tennessee cotton growers' position in a highly competitive global marketplace.

Commodity Distribution – TDA

administers USDA's food distribution program for the National School Lunch Program. This program supports American agriculture while providing nutritious food to schoolchildren. TDA also administers the Emergency Food Assistance Program, which supplements the diets of low-income people. In FY 2005, 36 million pounds of food valued at \$28.7 million were ordered and allocated for schools, child-care institutions and non-profit charities.

Tobacco Growers Trust — In 2004, Tennessee burley tobacco growers and quota owners were scheduled to share in more than \$32 million for the sixth year of a 12-year payout under the National Tobacco Growers Settlement Trust. However, with the passage of federal legislation in October 2004 to buyout the tobacco quota system, tobacco manufacturers laid claim to the more than \$420 million in Phase II payments regionwide. Tennessee promptly joined the national trustee and other tobacco-producing states in challenging the manufacturers' claim, ultimately arguing before the North Carolina Supreme Court that the buyout legislation did not trigger refund or credit provisions of the trust agreement for 2004. With a favorable decision by the court, the Tennessee Tobacco Farmers Certifying Board is prepared to distribute trust funds to more than 47,000 growers and quota owners certified in 2004.

Water Resources – The Agricultural Resources Conservation Fund provides grants to help landowners install Best Management Practices (BMPs) to improve water quality. In FY 2005, more than \$1.9 million funded

approximately 700 BMPs and 100 educational projects through Soil Conservation Districts, local Resource Conservation and Development Districts and universities.

The goal of the federally-funded nonpoint-source program, or 319 Program, is to remove rivers and streams from the state's list of impaired waters. The program funds projects that address nonpoint-source pollution from urban areas, abandoned mine lands, farms and forests. In FY 2005, approximately \$3 million in watershed restoration and educational projects were funded.

TDA continues its involvement in the federal permitting program for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), administered by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. In FY 2004, TDA assisted in rewriting Tennessee's CAFO

rules to comply with changes in federal regulations. The department's primary role is to review all nutrient management plans associated with CAFOs. To date, approximately 35 facilities have applied for a Class I permit and 26 permits have been issued. Approximately 179 facilities have applied for a Class II permit.

House Agriculture Committee member John Litz, Vice-Chairman Stratton Bone and Chairman Gene Davidson met with Governor Phil Bredesen and Commissioner Ken Givens early in the session to discuss the need to invest in agricultural development. The \$5 million appropriation for farm programs received widespread support among lawmakers.



Ag Revitalization

Governor Bredesen's third fiscally responsible, balanced budget marks an unprecedented investment of more than \$5 million dollars for agricultural revitalization. Supported by the General Assembly, these dollars are being used to build new opportunities in rural communities across Tennessee, including those hardest hit by the decline of tobacco.

The department is using these funds to bolster agriculture in three key areas. First, a portion of these dollars are being used to help fully integrate Tennessee into the National Animal Identification System to enable 48-hour traceback of any diseased or exposed livestock.

Secondly, cattle represent the largest contributor and the greatest opportunity for increasing farm income. The department is working with producers to improve the marketability of their livestock by developing a series of incentives and cost-share programs for genetic improvement.

Third, the department is expanding its current promotions of agri-tourism, organics, fruits and vegetables, value-added products, horticultural products, grapes and other specialty crops to help spur farm diversification and innovation.

Market Development

Market Development's services span from traditional producer programs to industry development and international trade missions, with the aim to build farm income.

Developing Tennessee's agricultural industries is the focus of Market Development. Current priorities focus on energy projects, ethanol and biodiesel. TDA coordinates its efforts with the state Department of Economic and Community Development for maximum impact.

Division efforts build bridges of opportunity between Tennessee producers/processors and world markets. TDA regularly joins the Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) to conduct cooperative marketing activities. In "reverse" trade missions, targeted buyers are brought to Tennessee where they can see Tennessee products and forge business relationships with producers. In the past year, Market Development staff have traveled to or hosted buyers from China, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Japan, Vietnam, Mexico, Poland, Africa and South Africa.

Grants from the Agricultural Development Fund continue to be a major source of support for agriculture and forestry-related organizations and industry-initiated marketing programs.

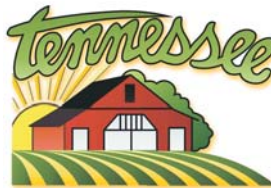
Market Development has ongoing programs for the domestic marketing of

processed foods, aquaculture, equine, wineries, horticulture, livestock, hay, ratites, fruits and vegetables and direct farm marketing, popularly referred to as agri-tourism.

Agricultural fairs attract 3 million visitors each year in Tennessee. Fairs have a significant impact on local and regional economies totaling \$12.6 million in gross receipts. TDA helps fund agricultural fairs, livestock shows, agricultural youth organizations and other programs promoting agriculture or providing agricultural education.

Livestock grading services and market news services help farmers strategically price and package their products. Fruit and vegetable grading is provided through a joint program with USDA. The toll-free Market News Hotline received more than 80,000 calls last year.

The Tennessee Agricultural Museum is the department's outreach program to provide school children and adults with an appreciation for agriculture's important past and current contributions to the state's economy and culture. The museum hosts more than 20,000 visitors annually for tours and educational activities. Hands on programs and special events are conducted on the grounds throughout the school year and "Summer Saturdays" outreach efforts continue to make the museum available to all citizens.



Bio-diesel Production in Tennessee



Alternative Energy Holds Promise for Tennessee Farmers

One goal of Market Development's agri-industry recruitment efforts is to build income for Tennessee farmers through the use of common row crops—corn and soybeans, specifically— as fuel.

Fuel made from soybeans is referred to as bio-diesel, and fuel made from corn is called ethanol. Bio-fuels are generating a tremendous amount of interest nationwide, as their use helps reduce dependence on traditional fossil fuels. Bio-fuels burn cleaner than fossil fuels, promoting better air quality. And, unlike fossil fuels, bio-fuels are a completely renewable, sustainable resource. Even the byproducts of bio-fuels—"distiller's grain" from corn and soybean meal from soybeans—can go to good use as livestock feeds. Bio-fuel byproducts also show promise as feed for another of Tennessee's major and still growing agri-industries: poultry. These new alternative fuel sources are also good economic news for Tennessee, representing millions of dollars each year to Tennessee's farmers and to the state's economy in the future.

Market Development is actively involved in building the foundation for this emerging

industry in Tennessee and increasing the demand for Tennessee grown corn and soybeans. TDA plans to help support new and increased bio-fuel production through funding, feasibility studies, facility planning and placement, locating the end users of these products and even identifying feedstock for the byproducts of bio-fuel production.

Tennessee's bio-energy production sites are expected to range from small, farmer-owned operations to large cooperative or investor-owned production facilities. Market Development staff are working closely with farmers within new legislation regarding the formation of cooperatives to investigate and begin forming new bio-fuel production facilities.

Ethanol production has garnered interest in all three grand divisions of the state. Currently, Loudon County is already home to an ethanol production site, and another site is under construction in Obion County. TDA has been heavily involved in securing and supporting the Cates Landing port for a major production effort in Lake County.

Bio-diesel production is underway in Harriman and in Milledgeville. A bio-diesel facility has been completed in Fayette County and another plant is going up in Warren County. There are also prospects for additional facilities in Giles, Marshall and Shelby counties.



Forestry

Forestry promotes the wise use of forest resources by helping landowners, fighting forest wildfires, providing quality seedlings, monitoring insects and diseases, improving urban forests, managing state forests, protecting water quality and collecting forest inventory data.

The division advises private, non-industrial landowners on sustainable forestry practices. It fights wildland fires, trains volunteer fire departments, issues burning permits, enforces fire laws and teaches the public fire safety.

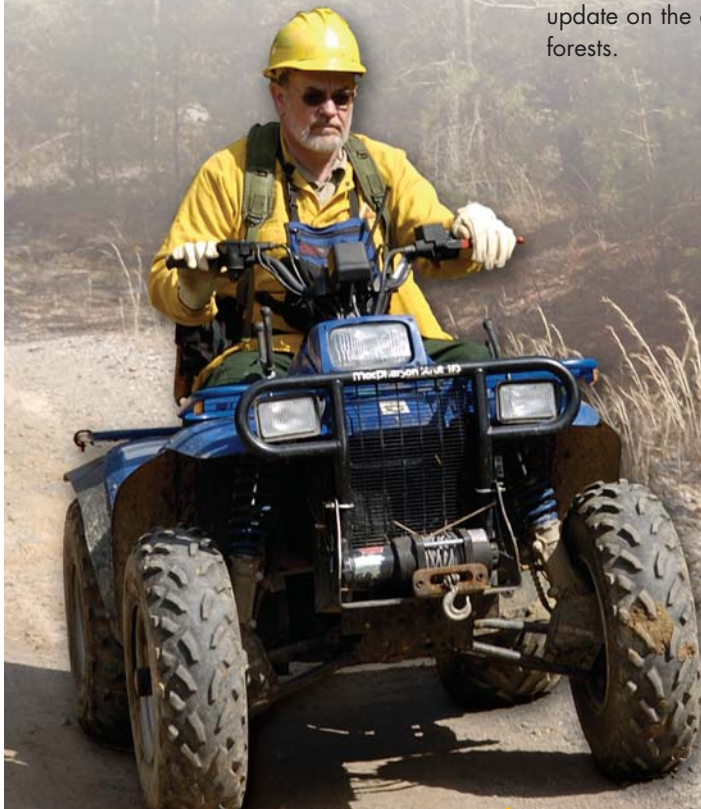
Division nurseries grow millions of pine and hardwood seedlings for timber production, wildlife habitat and erosion control, while developing genetically superior stock able to increase yields by up to 30 percent.

Forestry monitors insect pests, provides information to the public and takes action to control or slow the spread of certain forest pests. The division administers federal grants and provides technical assistance for urban forestry.

Forestry manages state forests for multiple benefits including recreation, wildlife, unique features, timber and water quality. The division monitors the demand for roundwood and the total volume of timber harvested on private lands.

The division works with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to monitor compliance with state water quality regulations and trains loggers in the use of best management practices.

Certified inventory foresters take detailed measurements of tree growth, quality, health and use for an annual update on the condition of Tennessee's forests.



Forest Protection

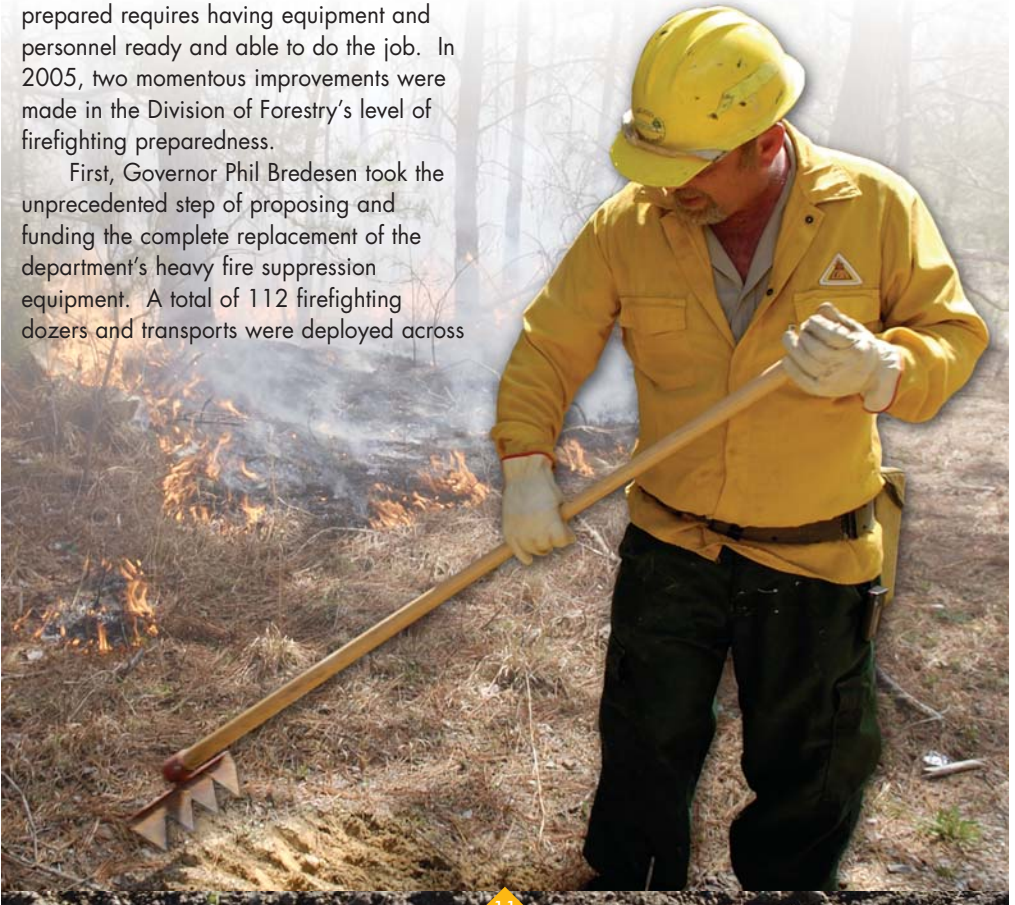
Most Tennesseans are surprised to learn that a little more than half of the state's 26 million acres are forested. Even more surprising is that in an average year more than 25,000 acres of Tennessee forestland are burned due to wildfire.

In both 2000 and 2001, during extended drought conditions, more than 40,000 acres of Tennessee forestland burned in less than a month. Firefighters, helicopters, air tankers and heavy equipment were brought in from across the nation to control the blazes. Being prepared for such a fire emergency is essential to protecting the forest resource, homes and lives. Being prepared requires having equipment and personnel ready and able to do the job. In 2005, two momentous improvements were made in the Division of Forestry's level of firefighting preparedness.

First, Governor Phil Bredesen took the unprecedented step of proposing and funding the complete replacement of the department's heavy fire suppression equipment. A total of 112 firefighting dozers and transports were deployed across

the state to take the place of worn, outmoded and unsafe equipment. This improvement not only provides division firefighters the safest and most technologically advanced fire equipment available, but it is expected to greatly improve efficiency and effectiveness in responding to and controlling wildfire.

Second, the division embarked on a physical fitness program that will assure that its firefighters are better able to endure the harsh and challenging wildfire environment. Both of these actions, joined with renewed efforts to work with fire cooperators such as rural fire departments, are important improvements in the department's programs to protect Tennessee's forest resources, its citizens, their homes and businesses.





To protect Tennessee's vast, beautiful and productive forestlands, the division not only suppresses an annual average of 2,500 wildfires but also has programs to protect water quality at logging sites and to manage destructive forest pests and diseases.

Although the average citizen seldom sees forest pests there are plenty in the woods. The hemlock woolly adelgid is threatening hemlocks in East Tennessee. Gypsy moths, which have been vigorously controlled for more than a decade, can denude an entire forest in a single season. And, sudden oak death disease has the potential to wipe out vast areas of our oak-hickory forests but so far has not been detected in Tennessee forests and has been kept in check through aggressive monitoring and regulatory controls. By working with

collaborative partner agencies and through field surveillance, the division is actively monitoring for and treating these and many other serious forest pests and diseases everyday.

Water quality has become a focal issue across the state. Maintaining water quality, even on the most intensive logging site, is our goal. Logger education, on-site visits, and complaint follow-ups have been highly effective in making the division's Water Quality Program successful. Tennessee has seen implementation rates of best management practices significantly improve in just eight years.

There are many reasons to believe that this trend will continue; the beneficiary being the health of Tennesseans and their forests.



Regulatory Services

The Regulatory Services Division monitors agricultural raw materials, products and services to assure quality, consumer protection, public safety and a fair marketplace.

The division works to control animal diseases. Accomplishments include the complete eradication of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis, swine brucellosis and pseudorabies; and a reduction in the incidence of equine infectious anemia.

Nursery, greenhouse, and plant dealer certification ensures healthy, pest-free plant material in interstate and international trade.

Regulatory Services registers pesticides, certifies applicators, monitors groundwater quality and inspects pest control businesses. The division inspects dairy farms, plants, milk transport trucks,

dairy and trade product distributors and milk samplers and registers dairy products. The division analyzes the quality of feeds, seeds and fertilizers.

Regulatory Services inspects retail food stores, food manufacturers, warehouses and distributors. Other responsibilities include enforcing bottled water regulations, performing custom slaughter-house inspections, hazardous substance inspections and labeling, and enforcing state laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors.

Truth in labeling is verified for fuel quality standards. Measuring devices such as fuel pumps, scales, and liquid propane gas meters are tested for accuracy. Checks are also made for net quantity on packaged products and for the accuracy of price scanners. The state metrologist ensures the consistency of industrial mass standards.

The laboratory supports animal diagnostics, food microbiology, toxicology, food residue, environmental monitoring and quality assurance for agricultural inputs such as feed, seed and fertilizers.



For Regulatory Services questions, comments or complaints regarding:

- agri-security
- animal and plant health
- food and dairy products
- food store sanitation
- pesticide use
- motor fuel quality
- weights and measures

**Call toll-free 1-800-OCTANE1
(628-2631)**



Tennessee Implements National Animal Identification System

In July 2005, the department took the first step toward fully implementing the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) in Tennessee by offering livestock premises registration statewide.

"Although the program is voluntary for now, animal identification is here and will have a tremendous impact on our ability to trace and control animal diseases that could affect Tennessee's billion-dollar livestock industry," said state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens.

NAIS is a program intended to eventually identify specific animals in the United States and record their movement over their lifespans. It is being developed by USDA and state agencies—in cooperation with industry—to enable 48-hour traceback of the movements of any diseased or exposed animal.

The starting point for building the NAIS is to identify "premises," which manage or hold livestock such as farms, feedlots, auction barns, fair and exposition grounds, and stockyards. System identification of individual animals, or lots in the case of poultry and swine, will begin in late 2005 or early 2006.

Within the first month of open registration, more than 1,000 Tennessee livestock premises were registered and assigned a unique identification number according to Dr. Charles Hatcher, who was named state animal ID coordinator in March 2005.



Partnering to Safeguard Animal Health - Surrounded by local agency representatives, Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens (center) was the first to register for the National Animal ID System following the program going statewide. Givens registered his family's beef cattle farm, which he operates with his brother Bill (far right) near Rogersville. "By registering my family's farm, I hope to show other farmers that it's important they participate not only because they're helping to safeguard animal health, but because it could also help ensure their access to markets in the future," says the commissioner.

The department partnered with key agencies and organizations to assist with the registration process including the University of Tennessee Extension, Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation, the Tennessee Farmers Cooperative and the USDA Farm Service Agency.

To register a premises, farmers and other property owners simply complete a one-page form available at participating local offices, with online assistance available at Farm Service Agency offices. Registration forms and instructions are also available on the department's Tennessee Premises Identification System Web site at Tennessee.gov/agriculture/tpis.

Registrants identify livestock species and provide basic information including a physical address and primary contact information for their premises in case of an animal disease emergency. Information is then entered into a national database and premises are assigned a unique seven-character identifier, or a Premises Identification Number (PIN). The database is accessed by state and federal animal health officials for the purpose of animal disease protection.



USDA's National Agricultural Statistics

The department maintains a cooperative relationship with USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Tennessee Field Office to provide timely, unbiased statistics including Tennessee crop acreage, yield, and production; crop progress and condition; livestock inventories; and economic information. The Tennessee Field Office, previously known as the Tennessee Agricultural Statistics Service, also has responsibility for the five-year Census of Agriculture, which provides the most comprehensive agricultural information available.

Information from NASS allows informed decisions to be made in both the public and private sectors and guarantees a "level playing field." All Tennessee Field Office data products are made possible through the willingness of the state's farmers who take part in agricultural surveys about their operations. This information enables us to ensure an accurate picture of Tennessee agriculture, and is also key in the correct distribution of federal grant monies. Individual information provided to NASS is kept in the strictest confidence and protected by law from disclosure with any group, other federal agency, or another individual.



The number of farms in Tennessee during 2004 decreased by 2,000 to an estimated 85,000. Farmland remained the same at 11.6 million acres, while the average farm size increased by three acres to 136 acres. Tennessee tied with Kentucky for 4th place in number of farms in the U.S., following Texas, Missouri, and Iowa.